

Tips for New Master's Students

1. Get Experience

As a Master's student, you are going to often find yourself surrounded by articles and books and may contemplate saving rent by moving into your lab or classroom. But your classroom-related experiences should not be your only focus! Now is the time to gain experience through campus activities, internships, employment, and community engagements. You need to be thinking strategically about how you can gain valuable experience (paid or unpaid) to help increase your skills and qualifications to be competitive.

2. Start Your Job Search Now

We want Master's students to take advantage of their time at UCSB and utilize career fairs, networking opportunities, and recruiting events. For many fields (accounting and STEM in particular), Fall is the time that these students are recruited. Therefore, it is important that you develop a job strategy and begin to employ your job search tactics at the start of your program. Come to the Career Center, check out Gaucholink (UCSB's online student only job posting website), and utilize your department and campus resources to your advantage to help showcase your talents.

3. Stay Focused

Your Master's degree is preparing you for a field of work that you have determined you want to do. Therefore, use this time to hone your skills and better understand what you want to do with this degree and how it will help you in your area of interest. Stay focused on what you want to do (or, come talk to someone to help you gain a clearer focus!).

4. Join and Network

You want to maximize your time at UCSB by networking with professors and building your contacts in your field. Now is the time to go to seek out opportunities to go to conferences and to join professional organizations. Importantly, there are often student discounts for conferences and professional organizations, so be on the lookout.

5. School is Your Job

School is your job, so treat it with the time, effort, and dedication required. You have given yourself this opportunity to learn more about a field or topic that is most interesting to you, so spend the time to do so.

6. Manage Your Stress

Anyone who has been through a Master's program can attest to the stress, pressure, and anxiety that can come with them. For those students returning to academia from being in the general workforce, the jolt back to campus life can be jarring. Our advice is to get your bearings as quickly as you can by realizing that stress is a natural part of graduate school. Knowing how and when the stress is too much to handle is vital to being a successful student: we encourage you to take a break, talk to your professors, talk to an academic advisor, and/or talk to a counselor before you get overwhelmed.

Welcome to the Gaucho Family!